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Securitising Culture During the Cold War: The Geopolitical Aspect of Culture in European Discussions, 1949–1974

Elina Sopo 

Department of Cultural Heritage Studies, University of Turku, Pori, Finland

ABSTRACT

Most of the existing academic analysis contend that culture and identity—as a security policy—appeared in the political discussions of European institutions as late as after the Cold War. While adopting a historical and contextualist approach, this paper challenges this account, analysing the geopolitical aspect of culture inside the triangle of political union, beside foreign policy and defence, identifying culture as an independent factor that influences foreign policy and its management. Analysis of the political documents of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe from 1949 to 1974 demonstrates that notwithstanding the CoE's character as being neutral and maintaining its distance from pure military functions, culture became security policy, an extension of the 'political aspects of the defence question' from the early 1950s on. Culture was lifted as a necessity above normal politics and as a question of survival, that is, it was securitised.

KEYWORDS

Europe; security; political warfare; culture; Soviet Union

Introduction

Policy makers' use of history and culture in European political discourse has traditionally been considered a very negative phenomenon, unless it is a question of a policy maker who can place a foreign policy issue in a deeper historical context and to use a historical analysis accurately and ethically to formulate his or her policy. A recent speech in which tradition and history are part of policymaker's creative statecraft, can be considered the 'Future of Europe' address in 17 April 2018, by the President of France, Emmanuel Macron. In this speech, significant identifications are placed on the possibility of a return to the past and in the moral decision representing tradition and history as not only what 'is' done in a society but also what 'should be' done,¹ as a bulwark against 1930s nationalism.

But while a rather decontextualised and ahistorical reasoning constitutes most of the academic analysis regarding European policy makers' history-policy-relationship, even more worrisome is that both securitisation scholars and culturalists contend that culture and identity appeared in the political discussions of European institutions as late as after the Cold War, thus assuming that culture became security policy only very recently.² To challenge both of these accounts, this study situates identity politics historically and connects the concept of culture to security, a neglected feature in the discussions of European culture or identity.³ It examines the political documents of the Committee of Ministers (CM) of the Council of Europe (CoE) from 1949 to 1974, and addresses the role of culture in the institution's need to secure and maintain

a sense of self-certainty (ontological security) in an uncertain world. There is no denying that in the preambles or articles, the term 'identity' is not used in the context of constructing a cultural European identity before the Maastricht Treaty.⁴ However, as seen by the CoE's statutes and by the discussions of the CM, the security-driven argument of 'culture' is represented largely in the context of securitisation and security, regarding European self-conception and the peril that haunts Europe from the early 1950s on. Culture broadly defined gained a central position in the triangle of political union, beside foreign policy and defence, including the process of managing the basic security system and the reflexively constituted process of encounters with the Other (which here can refer to an Other of Europe's own past, but also its constitutive Other during the Cold War years: the Soviet Union).⁵ These observations are in line with the definition of securitisation; it is a practice, a specific way of framing an issue, something that is presented and framed as existentially threatened and a concern that is treated and thematised as a question of survival and is done so by important actors.⁶

Observations about this have been made by Caroline Brossat in 1999 in a detailed study of the evolution of the concept of culture in the political discussions of European institutions. Brossat associates this strategic dimension of culture with the Union's early period but does not theorise on the phenomenon further.⁷ This question has since been ignored.

Applying Anthony Giddens's theory of the self and identity, this study presents the idea of security and broad notion of culture as contingent upon each other. Giddens connects modern or 'civilised' life to a sense of security,⁸ which is integral to Sigmund Freud's definition of culture: Freud recognises that cultural is all the activities and resources that are useful for protecting people against the *violence* of the forces of nature. Culture is *'the whole sum of the achievements and the regulations... which serve two purposes: namely to protect men against nature and to adjust their mutual relations'*.⁹ In both views, modern life is keenly linked to social life (people's urges for 'union with others in the community', i.e. the 'cultural urge'), but also to uncertainty and, hence, security (aggressive instinct, derived from the 'death instinct'). Balancing between the two is considered the work of culture: making harmless this hostility by weakening and disarming it. According to Freud, civilization [culture] obtains mastery over the aggression by setting up an agency to watch over it, 'like a garrison in a conquered city'.¹⁰

Giddens's theory has been widely used in international relations theories,¹¹ in particular in the work of the English School of International Relations, the School of Constructivism and diplomatic history in general, but less in historical studies. Here, it is considered to be invaluable because it places the agent in the context of historic conjunctures, discourses and institutions, encompassing modernity and reflexivity while not being tied to any particular cultural traditions.¹² Giddens's and Freud's theories can therefore be considered distinctively cultural theories to reread traditional domains of interstate relations, though the application of the concept of ontological security here emphasizes not just the question of stability and certitude, the general presupposition of most of the ontological security literature, but in particular adaptability, i.e. openness towards and the ability to cope with change, as suggested by Browning and Joenniemi.¹³

The attachment to a particular piece of the past—as characteristic of modern European institutions—is rationalised and exemplified here by the CoE (tradition in modernity). The emphasis is on the concept of 'fixation'¹⁴ and 'repetition':¹⁵ largely unconscious phenomena affecting identity and poorly understood in historical sciences. In the CM and assembly documents, this phenomenon can be seen in the repetition of tradition (culture) as an orientation to the past, such that the past protects against contingency and secures social cohesion. CoE can be considered an agent of the traditions that are typical in post-traditional societies (modern democracies) with high institutional reflexivity. This means that there must be a preparedness to enter into dialogue not only with other traditions, but also to defend the tradition *discursively* in a manner different from previous centuries while staving off the threat of violence.¹⁶ In the documents, the dilemma of identity preservation is resolved in Freudian and Giddensian sense; simultaneously

by adhering to tradition and by transcending the burden of it. The CM's minutes refer to keeping a degree of continuity in history, but this adherence to tradition appears to be more to control uncontrolled or threatening forces rather than invoking a unique political or cultural tradition, grand narrative or assumption about the exemplarity or exceptionality of Europe: notions that critical approaches have persistently connected to the CoE.¹⁷

Put differently, in contrast to foreign policy studies that focus on interest-related issues concerning the economy, military and security, this study concentrates on unobservable issues, such as beliefs, culture, ideas and identity, as independent factors that influence foreign policy and its management. As Markku Ruotsila contends, diplomatic historians often refuse to acknowledge the foreign policy significance of anything as intangible as religious conviction,¹⁸ and as seen in this study, the same may prevail for the notion of culture. Here, Alexander Wendt suggests that the analysis and theorising about international relations should begin with culture, which he defines as 'shared knowledge', 'shared mental model' or the 'distribution of ideas', which would then be followed by bringing in material forces, rather than the other way around. Culture invokes unobservable; therefore, its ethical dimension is also a central question.¹⁹

The obvious roots of the CoE are the European Movement, which was put in motion largely by veterans from World War II. The CoE's fundamental objective, as with the United Nations, was to avoid conflicts among its member states and promote their mutual wellbeing. The political aim of bringing peace to Europe has been a central argument of the integration theory of Europe—integration is also conceived of as a cultural and psychological process and part of a wider historical project for bringing about social cohesion.²⁰ Both institutions are inherently transnational, and they have championed the cause of human rights.²¹ Overall, the significance of 'the most peaceful of all organisations',²² the CoE, has been largely overlooked in scholarly discussions on European identity,²³ although it has always been 'in the CoE that major ideas were conceived'.²⁴ The intergovernmental CM—composed of foreign ministers of the member states—was the most influential organ of the CoE, and it had the authority to act in the name of the CoE.²⁵ Because the European Community adopted cultural discourse and policies from the CoE, gradually absorbing the role of the protagonist of the unification,²⁶ the present-day EU's rhetoric can also be better understood within this wider historical context. Currently, culture and intercultural relations are increasingly being recognised as decisive elements in foreign policy at all levels, and culture has been returned to the centre of the EU's foreign policy and is being called the 'hidden gem of EU's foreign policy'.²⁷ Analysing the geopolitical aspect of culture entails setting aside the more instrumental cultural tools and projects of the CoE (the European Cultural Convention established in 1954 and the Council for Cultural Cooperation in 1961) because their role, given their political subordination to the CM, has remained always to implement the CM's ideas.²⁸

The policy materials of the CoE being examined, which are from the end of World War II (1949) to the creation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (1975), illuminate a profound qualitative change that is represented by globalisation in the cultural realm.²⁹ Between the 1950s and 1970s, European discourse on the public rhetoric of the CoE changes primarily its attitude towards the Other. From the mid-1950s, the initially rigid discourse opens towards less antagonistic articulations of identity, becomes available for discursive scrutiny and to dialogue with pre-existing traditions and alternative modes of operation, which is a major trait of tradition in modernity, of a post-traditional society (Giddens's modernity).³⁰ Although this manner of articulation seems to have been particularly representative of Christian Democrat policy makers, the major political force in post-war Europe and the engine behind the launch of European integration,³¹ yet the CoE was not unique in this opening. The two greatest contemporary agents of tradition at the time—UNESCO³² and the Vatican³³—underwent an identical process where they had to re-interpret their relationship to modernity. In the post-Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) atmosphere, the agent of tradition *par excellence*, the Vatican modified its attitude towards its old, undetermined enemy—modernity—which changed the

conception of culture applied by the Church, which was now opening itself to hitherto unimaginable considerations and to dialogue and cooperation.³⁴ A similar shift appeared in UNESCO's rhetoric; essential options in 'truly democratic' policies were considered primarily cultural, changing the emphasis from purely technical and political considerations to *value judgments*, with culture becoming inherently linked to the *awareness of values*. In this process, a 'European approach to problems of culture', as represented also by the CoE in procedures, means and methods, opened completely new vistas.³⁵ An entirely new policy was emerging to face new and difficult problems in which cultural cooperation was placed at the centre.³⁶ Therefore, the opening of European discourse with various cultures (including the East), should not only be linked to the cultural revolution and culture wars that pervaded in the West in the 1960s, but also to the geographical and cultural proximity—and to the indirect but traditional influence of the Magisterium's new cultural discourse.³⁷

All in all, when a political ritual such as the CoE is analysed in light of the foregoing theories, secular (political tradition) and sacred traditions become theoretically identical: in both, there is the presence of the 'formulaic truth'—or as Freud put it, 'kernel of truth'—that makes aspects of tradition 'untouchable'.³⁸ Just as political discourses on the other side of the Atlantic contended that the United States was enjoying a distinctive covenant bond with God,³⁹ the analysed European discourses lift culture and, more specifically, the 'survival' values of a specific cultural tradition (Enlightenment and Modernity's ideas, spiritual and moral heritage), to quite a similar status. Invoking a certain set of values and identity commitments in its foreign affairs, the CoE's 1950s documents often read more like a sermon than a political discourse.

Securitising culture

As objects of analysis, minutes of the meetings of the CM and meetings of Ministers' Deputies (MD) of the CoE, Strasbourg, between August 1949 and May 1975 were qualitatively examined for any culture-bearing units in frequently used idioms, phrases and words. All minutes were read qualitatively with a special focus on 'unmeasurable' policy tools, which have explanatory power such as culture—broadly defined—and tradition, history, values and beliefs. The reading concentrated on the ideational milieu that may have limited or even constrained behavioural choices; therefore, the securitisation of culture is shown to have a close affinity with the strategic use of culture. As seen in these documents, the more historically rooted strategic preference is, the more it is immune to 'objective' conditions, and the more slowly it changes.⁴⁰ The adopted approach is not one of a political scientist but rather that of a historian, and the approach that the current study advances is, as Manuel Castells notes, that identity politics must always be situated historically.⁴¹

A repeated maxim that appears in the CoE's documents—and that has been particularly demised in academic discourse—is the adherence of policy makers to tradition and their allegiance to historical and cultural values from immemorial times.⁴² This phenomenon appears in three broad thematic areas: Europeanism, the Atlantic Alliance and anti-communism, in which one sphere often entangles with the other. Although the importance of the past is evident in all three thematic fields, the references to history or tradition are most representative in the themes of Europeanism and anti-communism but are not necessarily expressed through keywords such as heritage, history or patrimony. The aspects of time (safeguarding history, tradition and past) and culture are expressed mostly implicitly and are notably connected to the process of managing the basic security system and the reflexively constituted process of encounters with the Other ('survival'): a basic practical problem in foreign policy.

There are certain peaks or revivals in the mentioning of 'culture' (as calculated in the minutes of the CM); these are the end or the beginning of a new decade, which on the one hand may echo institutional changes, such as the integration of Western European Union's cultural work

into the CoE (1960)⁴³ or the anxiety aroused by the rivalry of the signing of the Treaties on the European Economic Community (1957).⁴⁴ On the other hand, they seem to follow the most urgent problems Europe faced at the time; the changes in East–West relations following the death of Stalin (1953), the ‘burning’ question of Germany after its entry into NATO (1955),⁴⁵ and the beginning (1964) and ‘euphoric’ period of the *détente* (1970–1973).⁴⁶ The specific peak after the late-1950s – early 1960s is connected to the beginning of a more systematic approach in the CoE’s cultural action.⁴⁷ This not only echoes the shift in the cultural discourses of the two other agents of tradition mentioned in the introduction, but most importantly, as a reaction to NATO’s strategic shift from strictly military-based themes towards its new focus on cultural and information fields in late 1950s.⁴⁸

A recurrent formula of Europeanism entangled with anti-communism is the description of Europe as one spiritual and economic whole that is linked by a common cultural heritage, geography and historical tradition, one that looks forward to ‘that day’ and welcomes any peaceful measures that will hasten that day, a time when all subjected to foreign constraint may enjoy the same liberties as European countries.⁴⁹ In other words, the need to avoid a final division of Europe is thematised culturally, that is, culture is securitised: security for all cannot be achieved based on this division, and Europe has to use extraordinary means to handle this threat.⁵⁰ Although actually belonging to a different political system, the CoE perceives the desire among the captive nations to adhere to European cultural and spiritual tradition, one in which Western Europe had the greatest responsibility.⁵¹

One of the most salient elements in these discussions of the Cold War during its first decade is a *spiritual* conflict and drama:⁵² in the materials, ‘survival’ as such in the then divided world is presented as succeeding only through cultural and scientific means: Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece, Conservative Evangelos Averoff-Tositsas noted that ‘... if Europe is to survive, in her full vigour, in this very divided world ... it can only happen through the cultural and scientific development of the countries of this old continent’.⁵³ The spiritual idealistic element is deeply emphasised: all questions of material destruction apart, Europe’s ‘spiritual and moral heritage’ is at stake, the report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy in 1951, authored by the Christian Socialist representative Paul Struye, noted.⁵⁴ Being aware of the military limits of the CoE’s statute articles, Christian Democrat Secretary General Lodovico Benvenuti invoked intellectual weapons and spiritual forces that alone could preserve the moral strength on which ‘all victories depend’. According to him, ‘the first task of an unarmed organisation such as ours, which has no power of decision, is ... to call to its aid all that thought, science and culture’ because:

the fall of a civilisation is not brought about by external agencies. A civilisation is threatened as soon as it ceases to be conscious of the common heritage which it is the duty of its peoples to defend, as soon as the nations of which it is composed lose their sense of common destiny and are no longer ready to join in making the necessary sacrifices to uphold their ideals.⁵⁵

A reoccurring element here is transcending the economic element; Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria, Christian Democrat Leopold Figl noted, ‘Europe would never be united ‘if only matters of political and economic concern were taken into account, and cultural and spiritual values disregarded’.⁵⁶ Indeed, starting with the earliest sessions of the Committee on Cultural and Scientific Questions in 1949 and 1950,⁵⁷ with members, among others, being Winston Churchill, Seymour Cocks, Leopold Sedar Senghor, and rapporteur Victor Larock, culture is thematised as an existential question, one that is linked to security, while the economy is described as not being enough: Europe involves ‘something deeper than our own economic and political systems’, ‘a belief in Man and in Freedom which is, in the last analysis, our true common heritage’, ‘it is precisely this union alone that can save our national cultures’.⁵⁸ This conceptualisation of culture as attaining ‘superior goals’⁵⁹ marks the CoE’s Europeanist discourse throughout the 1950–1960s, with a main emphasis placed on the primacy of the individual, anti-totalitarian and transcendent

humanism, greatest strength here being spiritual strength ('supremacy of the spirit'). As typical of the EU's early history, present is a strong meta-narrative of the historical development of Europe's past, present and future and a constitutive uncertainty about possibly returning to the past:⁶⁰ '... peoples have no more urgent or more elevated reason to unite than the determination to defend the unchanging ideas and the civilising values which constitute the most precious part of their common heritage', and 'it is opposed to totalitarianism, or to any political or educational system based on force'. In sum, culture is keenly connected with an ethical and moral premise and the quality of social life, but stability and order are also embraced.⁶¹

A second major element of the securitisation of culture is anchoring culture primarily to *values*.⁶² Therefore, in expressions such as safeguarding and encouraging the development of European culture,⁶³ culture does not refer to tangible sites, monuments or cultural productions, nor to essentialist and selective notions of Europe. Instead, culture is invariably being linked to those identity commitments and elements present in the problematic of European tradition, and are frequently described in the minutes 'to save Europe'. These survival values refer to Modernity's and Enlightenment values of peace, rule of law, democracy, human rights and liberty.⁶⁴ For example, in 1958, Christian Democrat Foreign Minister of Italy, Giuseppe Pella anchored culture primarily to certain values: 'To save Europe...in view of its common aims, traditions, culture and belief in freedom and the rule of law, only one way is open: that of cooperation, integration and unity...' The wisdom of governments is bound more and more to respecting the claims of 'geography, history, economics and politics', which Pella sums up in what could be called the political philosophy of the CoE;⁶⁵ the political and moral aim of collective security means defending and preserving the same *values*. In fact, treating these values, aims, beliefs and choices (culture) as a security issue, there is always present a moral decision and choice.⁶⁶ Securitisation is strongly present also in descriptions of European cultures being 'threatened with extinction', meaning the CoE had the noblest of aims in protecting European culture,⁶⁷ integration described as 'decreed by history',⁶⁸ and Europe having a 'mission' and 'historic duty'.⁶⁹ The CoE is generally described as a watchful guardian, repository and custodian of these existential values,⁷⁰ and one of the statutory reasons that prompted the creation of the CoE was self-defence in the face of danger.⁷¹ These values are repeatedly described as being so untouchable and sacred that even during the *détente*, when the CoE was opening itself up to 'reconciling incompatible political systems', the CoE remains the guardian of the aforementioned heritage of the ideals, institutions and liberties of Western Europe and would never compromise these principles.⁷² Benvenuti synthesised this element beyond geographical and legal limits: '... the Europe of history and ideas ... is far more vast than the Europe of treaties and diplomatic institutions'.⁷³

Although culture as security is part of the vocabulary of many political families of the CoE, such as Liberals, Social-Democrats, and Socialists, who all had a strong internationalist drive, it most noticeably appeared among Christian Democrats. In particular, this trait appears in Italian policy makers'—and during the *détente*, French policy makers'—vocabularies. Italian policy makers' handprints are strongly present in asserting the idea of safeguarding and preserving the spiritual values and traditions of freedom (Europeanism), but also in opening an intercourse with Europe's various cultures as a basis for a 'lasting peace' and hence contributing to world peace (anti-communism and Atlanticism).⁷⁴ As early as 1954, Foreign Minister Gaetano Martino (Italian Liberal Party) suggested opening up negotiations with the USSR for a system of collective security.⁷⁵ Secretary General between 1957 and 1964, Benvenuti—a participant in the preparation of the Rome Treaty and a member of the Consultative Assembly since its first session in August 1949—and Christian Democrat representative, diplomat and historian Giuseppe Vedovato⁷⁶—a member of the consultative assembly since 1954—both seem to have considered the problem of the spiritual [cultural] defence of Europe, one with which the CoE should be focused.

An attempt to save Europe from the final division is the report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy in 1956, drafted by Benvenuti, that discusses the Cold War in theatrical,

biblical and oppositional terms, reflecting the captivity and dualism of the identification of Eastern Europe. Benvenuti incarnates the Russian Other as being essential to Europe's self, by referring to Russia and, more broadly, the East using the biblical metaphor of the prodigal son who had 'stolen' those who were not part of this community today but would 'return to us all the sooner if we remain calm'. Here, Western Europe is represented as not being itself, remaining outside itself as long as Eastern Europe remains in the 'custody' of the Soviet Union, having been kidnapped:⁷⁷ '... on that day the prodigal sons will bring back what they have stolen from the family of mankind: its peace'.⁷⁸ Articulating what Europe is not, Benvenuti describes the psychological advantage held by communists. While being more tenacious, patient and disciplined, they knew how to exploit democratic system's and freedom's vulnerability, which would ultimately spell Western Europe's doom. Although the West should seize every opportunity of raising the Iron Curtain for cultural contacts, Benvenuti proclaimed that no individual country could work out 'its own salvation' alone: the largest countries would be weakened, and the smallest would be swallowed up.

All of the previous examples point to the securitisation process in which the cultural issue is lifted to an urgency and a necessity above normal politics. By saying that European culture and heritage is threatened, the policy maker implies any means necessary must be taken to block this threat. Because security is about survival, Europe has a right to survival and should be secured.⁷⁹ Because this was the question of the survival of the European civilisation, the central terrain and instrument in this mission focused on culture, thus economic cooperation would not be enough; the process of integration would have to be infused with unifying idealist contents, and in this, the CoE became a cornerstone. Regarding the cultural and geographical proximity of the Italian Christian Democracy to the Pontifical Magisterium, the invocation of cultural and spiritual values naturally echoes the message of the Magisterium's discourse in the sense that the edifice of modern culture must be built over spiritual principles,⁸⁰ although the link between the cultural and religious dimension in the material is always moral and political, not theological. But while anchoring culture to values provides a final guarantee against the communism (stability), as is seen in the next section, the mere presence of the Other in the discourses reminds Europe also of its own introjected, internalised aggressiveness. It risks the authentic urge towards union with others in the community (Freud named this 'cultural struggle'), and needs to be resolved at the earliest convenience, that is, during détente (adaptability).⁸¹

On the whole, because policy makers had a direct influence on and even guided the work of the CoE, their role can indeed be considered that of expert guardian and essential mediator of the powers of the repository of tradition; they were involved with ritual speech and formulaic truth. Foreign Minister Pella describes Benvenuti's working method as representing high idealism, optimism and 'profound faith'⁸²—an approach that Benvenuti defended from taking the oath in 1957 to his valediction in 1963. Describing the spiritual nature of the Cold War in 1957, Benvenuti warns of a decline of the spiritual and moral stamina of European people, of a fatalistic resignation to the march of events, which requires a spiritual strength of greater magnitude. While the world is 'ruled for good or evil by ideas', in the grip of overwhelming forces, there is yet still one source: 'the barrier between the possible and the impossible may be removed at will by faith'.⁸³ This approach synthesises the transcendent humanism: only by surpassing himself, man realizes himself.⁸⁴ Some ministers criticised this idealism (Sweden, Norway, Luxembourg), perhaps anticipating the mind shift of the changing era. Benvenuti's approach is accused as representing an era of professions of faith and grandiloquent resolutions, utopianism and the drafting of documents with more opinions and sentiment than based in reality. Backed by the UK, Germany and Greece, Italy's Foreign Minister's deputy, Carlo Russo defends Benvenuti's approach; 'the CoE is at one and the same time the symbol, the guardian and the exponent of this fundamental principle and, I should like to add, of this faith'.⁸⁵ Still in his valediction speech in December 1963, Benvenuti defends the idealism by paying tribute to John F. Kennedy's idealism and lasting impression on Europe: 'I hope that in your discussions ... it will

be never forgotten that the strength of any political and human edifice lies primarily in the ideas that it represents, the ideals that it defends and the sacrifices that peoples are prepared to accept to make them prevail'.⁸⁶

In summary, the fact that culture's securitisation seems notable in Italian policy makers' rhetoric should be connected not only to Italy's relationship with Europe, but also to its relationship with NATO, both of which were highly central for the Italian security and defence concept, particularly in the 1950s.⁸⁷ Speaking of NATO more generally and from an institution–historical point of view, there is a peculiar relevance for the European context and the securitisation of culture: the so-called broad concept of security, which was applied by NATO in the 1950s. On the whole, the theme of Atlanticism is visible in the materials, primarily in the development of the relations of the CoE with NATO, on the one hand, with European integration itself being 'written' in the 'cultural' Article 2 of the Atlantic Pact, as Benvenuti notes: 'some of the stages by which this process should be carried out are mentioned in Article 2 of the Atlantic Pact'.⁸⁸ On the other hand, culture's security function in the theme of Atlanticism appears in the reluctance, in particular in the 1950s, of the continental West European governments and organisations to adapt information policies to European audiences,⁸⁹ which in the CoE materials, appears in the problematisation of the ethical distinction between the 'cultural' and 'informative' activities applied in the Atlantic Alliance, but also in the feeling of rivalry and concern regarding NATO's increasing engagement in promoting a non-military (cultural) programme in its Article 2.

Because of overlapping membership, the CoE and NATO⁹⁰ always maintained transnational exchanges, exchanged information with each other in the spheres of culture and information and visited each other's meetings, at least starting in 1954 (Committee on Culture, Science and Education of the CoE [CCSE] and the Committee on Information and Cultural Relations of NATO [CICR]).⁹¹ But the appearance of NATO itself made the CoE review the restriction clause in its own statute, Article 1(d), which excludes 'Europe's foreign policy' within the scope of the CoE.⁹² The fundamental aims and purpose of the Atlantic community did not appear to be much different, if at all, from those of the CoE. Some of NATO's early cultural actions are reminiscent of the CoE's cultural actions,⁹³ and towards the end of the 1950s, the CoE estimated that NATO's military matters were 'only of secondary interest', placing the highest importance on the cultural programme, threatening the CoE's own institutional status.⁹⁴ Although the CICR offered an important forum of discussion of anti-communist and general information policies,⁹⁵ NATO's cultural actions did not always sit well among CoE parliamentarians.⁹⁶ Therefore, it is pertinent to stress the institution–historical inheritance of the CoE, which is keenly linked to NATO and NATO's preceding (security) organisations, whose activities extended from the military and economics to culture and each of whose treaty contained a cultural clause. One such preceding organisation is the Western European Union (WEU), which inherited its cultural and social activities from the Brussels Treaty Organisation (BTO). The BTO's defence functions were absorbed by NATO in 1951, while the WEU's cultural work was integrated into the CoE's cultural work in 1960.⁹⁷

But from a cultural security strategy point of view, even more relevant is that NATO's cultural clause in Article 2 is not distinct from the traditional defence build-up but instead contains the 'fundamental goals of the Treaty'. As recommended by the Pearson Committee in 1951, the Cultural Consultant in 1954 (which also collaborated with the CoE) and the 'Committee of Three' in 1956,⁹⁸ NATO's strategic emphasis in the mid-1950s was put increasingly on non-military cultural activities, because as noted by the Secretary General of NATO Lord Ismay, to a certain extent 'information must precede action'. The Article 2 fostered an understanding of institutions in their broadest sense (as traditions, cultures and ways of life).⁹⁹ Foreign Minister of Italy, Gaetano Martino was a particularly important member of the transnational network between NATO and the CoE because he was one of the 'Three Wise Men' of the Committee of Three that reviewed NATO's strategic concept, placing an emphasis on the implementation of Article 2 outside the military sphere: in 1956, Martino suggested the Committee of Ministers that the CoE

would best preserve its influence in the broader field of international relations by emphasising its political and moral, non-military (cultural) dimension and potential.¹⁰⁰ Lord Ismay professed that the day would come when the element of culture would become the 'real battlefield'. This would be the day when the 'risk of aggression becomes less pressing',¹⁰¹ which is evident in the European discourses of the current study during the détente; during the détente, the element of culture indeed shifted to the heart of the security, as professed by Lord Ismay.

The demand of modernity-or the sign of the times?

Regarding the ideological conflict between East and West, the representations of the Soviet Union and the East contain pervasive (military and political threat)¹⁰² but also alternative cultural representations. The CoE itself was viewed with persistent suspicion and distrust by the Soviet Union until the late 1960s. It was considered to have an ideological origin that tainted it, was purely 'Western' in attitude and was considered an indirect organ of NATO. Gradually, however, this attitude of mistrust and open hostility transformed into a cautious form of acceptance *de facto* in the late 1960s.¹⁰³

In the pervasive representations of the 1950s, such as the biblical metaphor discussed above, the Other is pertinent to the perception of European identity to the extent that the Soviet threat is a unifying function:¹⁰⁴ Foreign Minister of Greece, Conservative Stefanos Stephanopoulos noted 'the desire to defend what is most valuable in the European heritage against encroachments of Powers, whose ideas were completely alien to our conception of life'.¹⁰⁵ On the whole, it is as if the speaker would be able to perceive the 'grave political problems of our age' [Cold War], which Europe faced, 'the dangers that threaten her, the tremendous problems with which she is faced and the cultural heritage of which she is the custodian'¹⁰⁶ only by mirroring herself to the Other. In two anthropomorphised portrayals of Europe, one by Paul-Henri Spaak and the other, as already noted, by Benvenuti, Europe is shown in terms of its feelings, mentality and psychology, convincing and reassuring its Other—the Soviet Union—of the Soviet Union's own suspicions and mistrust of the West. Europe strives to satisfy the Soviet Union's concern for its own security by offering moral guarantees regarding the memories that haunt it. At the same time, Europe is on alert for Russia's changing methods: seduction, calculated affability and a smile were replacing the old methods of intimidation. On the other hand, Europe is asking only to live free from continual menace, and is being a 'mistress of her own destiny'.¹⁰⁷ Put differently, the most precious possession, European heritage, is securitised also in the theme of anti-communism, upon which the CoE maintained a constant, scrupulous and determined watch so that any member of the 'European family' would not feel that it was being 'left out in the cold'.¹⁰⁸

In contrast to the general presupposition of the critical literature that during the early years in European discourses not the past, but the future—and progress—solely dominate and critical events, such as World War II, were a sort of a black box that no political actor dared to open in the European arena until the 1990s,¹⁰⁹ significant aspect in the minutes are repetitions of Europe overcoming the mistrust, fear, resentment and memories that haunted the Soviet Union, to give it maximum assurances that there is no threat to its security by establishing the impossibility of a return to nationalism, a question that is highly cultural. Renationalisation being a threat to Europe is visible in Europe's overcoming of Europe's own past,¹¹⁰ for example, in notions concerning fear of Germany's falling into 'aggressive nationalism because of isolation', 'inherent danger of any strengthening of the Germany', 'certain forms of nationalism in Europe', 'Europe should steer clear of Western jingoism', 'mistrust and fear which had so long characterised its [Soviet Union] attitude to the Federal Republic', 'no new danger to the Soviet Union should be allowed to arise', and 'in draft communiqués, the Soviet Union often tries to include sentences referring to neo-Nazi activity in West Germany'.¹¹¹ Although this more introspective and self-

critical aspect is more typical for the 1960s, in terms of cultural discourse, the CoE's European project's relationship to the past cannot be described as a complete rupture with the past, or a 'memoryless' discourse, in which amnesia prevailed, as claimed by most of the existing analysis.

Although the attempts to look at the Other through the eyes of the Other¹¹² clearly intensified during the *détente*, already in the 1950s numerous attempts were made to divorce Europe from the values of a particular (i.e. European) culture and to become open to a discursive scrutiny and justification. Immediately after General Secretary Joseph Stalin's death in 1953, socialist representative, founding CoE member and president of the Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community, Paul-Henri Spaak, reflected on identity and the fusion of the political and cultural heritage of Russia. He envisaged Russia as consisting of two parts, the Soviet political system and eternal Russia,¹¹³ or as Spaak states, 'pure Russian tradition': the sum of various influences that together form a 'highly complicated picture'.¹¹⁴ Spaak aimed for a deeper cultural understanding of the Soviet Union, noting that Russians were 'haunted by certain memories and by the fear of Germany', to which the European community only could provide moral guarantees. Therefore, Spaak notes that '[W]e [Europe] must seek to understand the chief characteristics of the Soviet Union' because 'this picture has not always been readily understood by our peoples in the West. It must be recognised that we know little of the real state [of the Soviet economy and of the social development of Russia] in the last thirty years.' According to Spaak, the quintessential question was what the real aims of the Soviet Union were and what Russia stood for and what Russia was aiming at. This example highlights certain transition points, such as Stalin's death or, later, the beginning of normalisation. These situations represent the crossroads of existence that Giddens refers to as fateful moments or critical situations; Stalin's death as a particular rite of passage is here connected to the *longue durée* of institution. It enables continuity and is particularly consequential for the future.¹¹⁵ Spaak in fact aimed to work out a long-term policy to which to adhere in order to avoid finding 'at the mercy of events and circumstances.' Referring to the personality of Stalin and to his sudden disappearance, there is also the tangible presence of a threatening adversary although the controversial figure of Stalin was an object of Spaak's thought also in other occasions. Once asked about the parentage of the European Economic Community, Spaak had referred to Stalin as its father.¹¹⁶

An alternative representation of the Soviet Union is a report that reflected the signing of the European Cultural Convention document by the Soviet Union and any other Eastern country in 1955. Conservative assembly member, Nigel Nicolson unconventionally emphasises a common history, culture and geography,¹¹⁷ depicting Russia as a part of Europe: '[T]he countries of East Europe, and to a large extent Russia herself, have owed as much to our common, European culture as they have contributed to it'. Nicolson went so far as to declare that 'on matters of political and social policy, the aims of the Council of Europe are incompatible with the doctrines of Communism, but culturally, however, no such basic incompatibility exists'.¹¹⁸ Nicolson asks:

Is Russia to be included in our invitation or not? She is only partly a European country in the geographical or cultural sense. Though she has drunk deeply of the cup of European culture, so, too, has the United States ... We should always remember that the Europe for which we speak does not stop at the political frontiers between East and West. By striving to make our own nations more conscious of their common culture, we are also helping to keep alive the European idea ...¹¹⁹

To summarize, this rather regular and rigid self-reflection in identity terms appearing in the documents during the 1950s, as evident in the dichotomies such as true peace/false peace, freedom/enslavement, democratic/totalitarian, West/East, capitalist/communist and public discussion/secret manoeuvres, affirms that only by being not totally secure can an identity be sustained. Although Europe by definition was not secure in the 1950s, it perceived its identity rather strongly because there was the Other. The uncertainty of Europe's self, which Russia's representation was associated with, produced more a clearly perceived identity.¹²⁰ Likewise, Manuel Castells contends that this period represented the 'easy identification' of the external Other.

When the Other disappeared, the 'age of confusion' started.¹²¹ These examples also show how essential a factor the culture is in policy makers' casting identity into a corresponding counter-identity, and how this transforms culture and history into becoming a vital component of the European security order.¹²²

The period in which culture became intrinsically linked to foreign policy and security occurred during the normalisation period, which began in 1964. Conservative Secretary General Peter Smithers, whose term (1964–1969) is characterised by a cautious but active opening to the policy of normalisation, considered it important to look at the situation in light of present conditions and 'not feeling too bound by the heritage of the past'.¹²³ In 1964, the CM opened the technical work of the CoE to non-member states in Eastern Europe.¹²⁴ Although the perspectives expand during this time, the insistence on the past and culture persists. Now feelings of remorse regarding past attitudes—according to Freud 'the most important problem in the development of civilization',¹²⁵ the sense of guilt—were expressed. Gaullist Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of France, Michel Habib-Deloncle asked whether the CoE had not, in its vocabulary, institutions and in some of its instruments, for years carried about vestiges of a former period that might cause the Eastern countries some embarrassment about approaching the CoE. Habib-Deloncle suggested showing a more tolerant attitude towards the East and to get away from the 'hangover of previous periods' although it was always difficult in an organisation like the CoE to overcome the 'natural memories' that linger.¹²⁶ Now, notions of interest in Russian feelings, or looking at things through 'Soviet eyes', appear. Discussions give way to a more impartial political rhetoric and to the possible new role that the continent and the CoE should play in a global context: the institution should not think in terms of elementary anti-communism but simply assert its values because the détente was a question of 'broadening the vista'.¹²⁷

Importantly, a significant thematic disappearance occurs in the CoE's minutes, concurrent with an identical phenomenon appearing in the Vatican's cultural document *Gaudium et spes*.¹²⁸ Stronger forms of condemnation of communism vanish, gradually giving way to a respect for differing social and political systems that should not be an obstacle to international relations. More generally, this shift—or the transition from traditional to new universalism—has great affinities with the changing cultural discourses of both the Vatican¹²⁹ and UNESCO. Like the Vatican, the CoE overcame the unrealistic prospect of the role of ultimate arbiter in the international community. CoE refrained from criticising internal Eastern European situations. The claim of moral primacy gave way to an equal position that respected the *other actors in the international system*, placing the pursuit of dialogue and confrontation with any interlocutor at the highest priority. In terms of cultural analysis, the Second Vatican Council and its 'cultural reading of the epoch' is, in fact, a fundamental watershed in which the concept of culture was thoroughly studied and re-evaluated, harmonising the significance of its two senses: 'classical' and 'anthropological'.¹³⁰ In this *aggiornamento*, the collective security, the stability of the international community and the wellbeing of its citizens in a global perspective becomes a central objective.¹³¹ The spirit of respecting individual country's alliances and ideologies is clearly visible also in UNESCO's change of emphasis from politics to values in Venice Conference in 1970, but the new thinking of the CoE is specifically represented in the UNESCO's Helsinki Conference of 1972. In Helsinki, Director General of UNESCO, René Maheu stated that the fundamental choices regarding war or peace are a question of values and, hence, culture.¹³² Christian Democrat Foreign Minister of Italy, Aldo Moro specifically referred to the dilemma of modernity. It was seen as pertinent to resolve problems raised by the swift transformation of modern society and emerging divisions, which Moro linked to security, peace and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) that was being prepared.¹³³

Culture was now being considered the best vehicle for experiments in this new type of international relations, but simultaneously, it was the most delicate sphere to be addressed because questions dealing with culture lie at the 'very heart of political and social systems'.¹³⁴ A special political significance was attached to the sensibility of these cultural factors. Smithers noted that

the possibilities to intensify cultural relations were seen to lie first in strictly technical matters, which had 'little political context' and then, for example, in juridical matters, for which a large measure of agreement could be obtained; only 'at [a] much later stage in cultural matters where the political element is apt to be much larger'.¹³⁵ Indeed, the 'strategic' or security dimension of culture can be identified specifically in this discomfort regarding the subject of culture, conceptualised now in its broadest sense (knowledge, belief, morals and customs). This is particularly visible during the euphoric period of the *détente* from 1970 to 1973.¹³⁶

The reason why culture became considered a major source of security can be found in the discussions of the preparation for the CSCE, in particular in the French ministers' explanations. The success of the conference itself was noted to depend in the work done in the 'cultural basket' (third basket) that contained long-term objectives for free exchanges of people, ideas, cultures, education and information, or as stated by Turkey's foreign minister, Democrat Turan Güneş, 'the seeds of the finest flowers of civilisation'.¹³⁷ The CoE and the member states adhered to the concept that European security itself was tied to this basket. It became the primary condition for security because, as the Centre-right Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of France, Jean-François Deniau noted, security went hand in hand with freedom. First, the barriers that separated men and nations would have to be moved because they prevent the movement of ideas. Therefore, it was the 'true yardstick of genuine *détente*'.¹³⁸ France's Gaullist Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Jean de Lipkowski adds, 'without freedom there could be no real security'. In sum, there was an organic interdependence between the political [here cultural] and military aspects of security.¹³⁹ It was specifically this basket that presented the greatest problems, as noted by Parliamentary Secretary of State, Free Democrat, Karl Moersch of the Federal Republic of Germany. Many other foreign ministers during the whole course of the *détente* shared this view.¹⁴⁰ Eastern and Western views mostly differed in the essence of culture: the state-centred conception of culture (state and party's interference in the goals and content of culture, thought and expression) versus an individual-centred (recognition of the individual as the beginning and end of cultural cooperation; decentralised and 'democratised' conception of culture) view. Mere public discussion of items in the third basket was considered a danger to Eastern Europe.¹⁴¹

Here, culture, much like identity, became the dangerous area where the project may self-destruct if it challenges nations in an overly confrontational manner.¹⁴² On the other hand, rather than positing a singular cultural narrative at the expense of others, the discussions enabled the coexistence of competing political and cultural imaginaries, thereby shaping the contours of modern Europe: Conservative Secretary General of the CoE (1969–1974), Lujko Tončić-Sorinj discusses the 'moral integration' of Europe, noting that 'powerful forces are at work, some of them after long evolution', after which Europe should emerge stronger than before: it would be 'varied but robust one, enriched by the contributions of the nations, aware of its incomparably rich heritage, forward-looking, and tolerant towards all.'¹⁴³

Conclusion

Theorists studying European institutions have contended that culture as a term was excluded in the first phases of what was to become the European Union. In this view, culture is considered as having 'lacked status' during the early years of the integration process, deemed solely of 'esoteric and marginal interest', even among European policy makers themselves prior to the 1980s.¹⁴⁴ Likewise, securitisation scholars contend that culture and identity as a means of security appeared as late as after the Cold War. By introducing the reader to the sample documentation—and in the light of the security theory—first, this study has argued that CoE policy makers portrayed culture increasingly as a question of security and survival starting in the early 1950s. Culture and history were presented and framed as existentially threatened, that is, they were

securitised. Culture's protective element in the documents appears literally in obtaining mastery between the urge for 'union with others in the community' and the threat of aggression.¹⁴⁵

Second, policy makers' refrains in two CoE institutions represent what Freud and Giddens call fixation and repetition, that is, the intrinsic nature of tradition. The repetition, like the strategic preference in the documents is linked to the adherence to ethical and moral values related to Modernity. They are historically rooted and therefore highly immune to objective conditions. In the CoE documents, tradition is indeed discursively articulated, defended and justified as having value in a universe of multiple competing values, but the dilemma of identity preservation and ontological security is resolved in Freudian and Giddensian sense, simultaneously by adhering incessantly to tradition and transcending the burden of it. While *stability* is an important element of ontological security of the CoE in the initially rigid discourses of the 1950s, the institution gradually *adapts* and *opens* to the demands of modernity in the 1960s, and towards less antagonistic articulations of identity.

Although Waever justly notes that identity is the difference 'between what one is and what one wants to be',¹⁴⁶ Freud placed the uttermost importance of history when it comes to identity, as put by Freud-scholar Philip Rieff: man cannot become what he wishes to be. He can only become what he has been.¹⁴⁷ In fact, the major requirement for safeguarding a coherent self and continuity is *tradition* and *history*: only the perpetual restructuring of tradition can for each new generation safeguard the 'average expectable' continuity, which is a *matter of survival*.¹⁴⁸ The objective of Freud is, on the one hand, to remind us of history's importance in offering sole control to the maintenance of identity in the face of uncontrolled forces, but at the same time, to emancipate us from the burden of it. Here Freud paradoxically conveys similar message of the Church that man most valued is the one who transcends history, and escapes the burden of it.¹⁴⁹

Third, this study argues that both sacred and political traditions are theoretically similar. The fixation and repetition of tradition in the materials appears in an attachment to a particular portion of the past that is effectively unknown and 'forgotten'. This *unknown known* past (unconsciously known) produces an incomparably strong influence (irresistible claim), manifests rather obsessively and is always treasured by the community, much like by the CoE, as its 'most precious possession' 'against which all logical objections remain powerless' (untouchable).¹⁵⁰ Such fixations on the past are most typical with religious rites and doctrines, survivals, reproductions and reappearances after long intervals of what has been 'forgotten'. Both sacred and political traditions are indeed connected with a kernel of and formulaic notion of truth: in both, tradition is a binding force that combines moral and emotional content, has guardians, involves rituals but has ritual speech that is incontrovertible. In this view, political rituals, such as the CoE, have a religious quality indeed. In particular, international institutions and organisations, specifically the agents of tradition, such as UNESCO and the CoE, may be considered of a 'providential nature'¹⁵¹ because their mission is consistent with the universal common good and the 'plan of God'. Political figures resemble religious figures in that they are involved with the ritual speech and hence with the formulaic truth of the repository of tradition.¹⁵²

Another question is the position of culture in this performance of phenomena, in which the Cold War can be considered a background circumstance and ideational milieu. It can be argued that culture became vital in the triangle of the political union: the CM's cultural discourses represent the CoE's political encounters with the Other and vice versa. In fact, a striking feature in the discussions is that the boundaries between cultural and political identity nearly merged and become confused. And, in line with the theory of the Other, as Neumann rightly points out, the Other does not reside in essential and readily identifiable cultural traits but rather in relations.¹⁵³ As Giddens notes, the point is not only that the Other answers back, but that mutual interrogation is possible. Furthermore, it should also be emphasised that when Europe discusses the Other, it mainly discusses itself because having a counter-identity is crucial for a perception of the self. The uncertainty of Europe's self of which Russia's representation is associated produces

a more clearly perceived identity; therefore, it is at its 'weakest', that the perception of identity is all the clearer.

In other words, the documents examined in this essay are speech acts that represent an ever-returning identity problem that varies over time. The 1950s represented an increasing mutual alienation in terms of identity and culture, and the 1960s facilitated more inclusive discursive practices, when Europe 'transcended' itself. But looking, for example, to the nineteenth century, this variation may only repeat century-old positions, the 'old format' of relations between the two concerned parties.

Although the discourses of the 1950s present communism as the common enemy, Europeanism is here more than the simple sum of nationally oriented goals and anti-communism.¹⁵⁴ Europeanism maintains the allusion of a common heritage—in the sense of adherence to the ethical and moral values related to modernity (stability)—but already from the mid-1950s, European discourse juxtaposes its own identity with the traditions outside Europe (adaptability). In the 1960s, this approach still diversifies, with the anti-communist factor put more in the background. Noteworthy is that the insistence on the past and culture persists throughout the period of examination.

The historical discourses in the present essay delineate the shape of repetition and fixation at the level of documentation. As a consequence of the 'primary mutual hostility' of human beings, 'civilised society' is perpetually threatened with disintegration, so the repetitions become discursive defences of tradition, meaning there is preparedness to enter into dialogue while at the same time suspending the threat of violence.¹⁵⁵ The CoE discussions echo the moral and emotional content of tradition, which has a binding force because of the measure of ontological security it offers to its adherents.

Notes

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Notes on contributor

Dr Elina Sopo is a cultural historian located as a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Turku, School of History, Culture and Arts Studies, Department of Cultural Heritage Studies. Sopo's dissertation and publications have focused on the nineteenth-century Russian empire, with a particular focus on the origins and expression of Russian state cultural strategies.

ORCID

Elina Sopo  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4227-7492>